

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15

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FM USMISSION USBERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2971

AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN UNN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L USBERLIN 1740

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, WB, US, UK, UR, FR, GW, GE

SUBJECT: SENAT VIEWS ON AUTOBAHN INCIDENT AND JOINT TRANSIT
COMMITTEE MEETING

REFS: (A) BONN 13913, (B) USBERLIN 1717, (C) BONN 13914

(D) USBERLIN 1731, (E) STATE 206862

1. SUMMARY: SENAT FROM GOVEXRNING MAYOR DOWN CONSIDERS
AUGUST 13 VIOLATION OF TRANSIT AGREEMENT MOST SERIOUS SINCE
QA CAME INTO EFFECT,BUT SEEMS HESITANT TO RECOMMEND
DECISIVE ACTION AT THIS TIME. MISSION SHARES BONN'A
DISAPPOINTMENT THAT ALLIES AND FRG APPARENTLY FAIL TO SEE
THAT LONGER TERM INTERESTS OF BOTH ARE BEING THREATENED
AND WELCOMES DEPARTMENTS DECISION TO RENEW EFFORT TO WIN
SUPPORT FOR DEMARCHE TO SVIETS. END SUMMARY.

2. IN REGULAR MONTHLH SESSION WITH COMMANDANTS
AUGUST 19, GOVENING MAYOR SCHEUTZ TOOK SERIOUS VIEW OF
AGUSUT 13 TRANSIT INTEFERENCE, SAYING THIS WAS MOST
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SERIOUS MATTERSINCE QA CONCLUDED,MUCH WORSE THAN JULY

1974 INTERFERENCE RELATED TO ENVIRONMENTAL AGENCY. HE SAID THAT WHILE HE DID NOT HAVE DETAILS OF WHAT GDR SIDE SAID AND PROVIDED IN AUGUST 18 TRANSIT COMMISSION MEETING, HE DOUBTS GDR POSITION IS ACCEPTABLE TO FRG. NEXT STEPS MUST, HOWEVER, BE STUDIED VERY CAREFULLY, SINCE GDR "VERY CLEVERLY" BASED ITS POSITION ENTIRELY ON ALLEGED ACTIONS OR INTENDED ACTIONS OF TRAVELERS WITHIN GDR, NOT IN WEST BERLIN, AND HENCE FRG HAS DIFFICULT TASK OF PROVING THERE IS NO EVIDENCE OR INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE TO THIS EFFECT. SCHUETZ WAS THUS IMPLYING (INCORRECTLY IN OUR VIEW) THAT FRG AND ALLIES MUST RESTRICT THEMSELVES TO CAREFUL EXAMINATION OF GDR PRESENTATION AND SUPPORTING MATERIALS, AND BASE FURTHER COMMENTS, REBUTTALS OR PROTESTS ON FACTS AS PRESENTED BY GDR IN TRANSIT COMMITTEE MEETING.

3. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION AS TO WHETHER HE COULD SEE ANYTHING GOOD COMING OUT OF AFFAIR, SCHUETZ SAID THAT WHILE THERE CAN REALLY BE NO SATISFACTORY EXPLANATION OF THE AUGUST 13 STOPPAGES, SATISFACTORY OUTCOME TO WHOLE AFFAIR WOULD BE IF FRG COULD GET ADEQUATE GUARANTEES FOR FUTURE, I.E., THAT IT IS IMPERMISSIBLE FOR GDR TO ASK TRAVELERS WHY THEY ARE GOING TO BERLIN, SINCE THIS IS NONE OF GDR'S BUSINESS. HE CONCLUDED BY SAYING HE THINKS ALLIES SHOULD TALK TO SOVIETS ABOUT MATTER AND URGED THAT BUS STOPPAGES BE VIEWED IN BROAD PERSPECTIVE OF WHAT SOVIETS AND GDR ARE CONTINUING TO TRY TO DO TO WEST BERLIN IN TERMS OF ISOLATING IT FROM FRG, EUROPEAN COMMUNITY AND WEST GENERALLY.

4. SCHUETZ ADDED AS PERSONAL REMARK THAT HE HAD NO GREAT DESIRE TO LA HIS HAND IN FIRE FOR GROUP OF CDU DEMONSTRATORS OF WHOSE ACTIVITIES AND BEHAVIOR HE DID NOT APPROVE, BUT HE RECOGNIZED THAT IT IMPORTANT THAT THEIR RIGHT TO TRAVEL TO BERLIN FOR WHATEVER PURPOSE MUST BE PROTECTED.

5. IN CONTRAST TO PRESENTATION TO COMMANDANTS BY GOV MAYOR, WHO CLEARLY FOUND HIMSELF ON HORNS OF DILEMMA, VIEWS OF SENIOR SENAT OFFICIALS EXPRESSED EARLIER IN DAY AUGUST 19 BESPOKE MUCH GREATER WILLINGNESS TO ALLOW MATTER CONFIDENTIAL

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TO BE PLAYED OUT IN MOST LOW KEY MANNER POSSIBLE. PRESAGING VIEWS EXPRESSED LATER IN DAY BY GOV MAYOR, SENAT CHANCELLERY DIRECTOR HERZ TOLD ACTING SENAT LIAISON OFFICE THAT NO GDR EXPLANATION FOR STOPPING BUSES COULD BE CONSIDERED "SATISFACTORY" BECAUSE STOPPAGE ITSELF COULD NOT BE TOLERATED. AT SAME TIME HE SAID WHOLE MATTER COULD HAVE COME OUT MUCH WORSE HAD GDR INSISTED ON POLEMICIZING AT TRANSIT COMMITTEE MEETING. HERZ REPORTED ON RESTRAINED

GDR PRESENTATION WITH SOME RELIEF AND ADDED IT WAS QUITE EVIDENT THA GDR WISHED TO PLAY DOWN WHOLE INCIDENT.

6. MISOFF EXPLORED WITH HERZ QUESTIN WHETHR THERE HAD BEEN ANY PRIVATE GDR - FRG EXCHANGES PRIOR TO JOINING TRANSIT COMMITTEE MEETING WHICH MIGHT HAVE LED FRG TO EXPECT GDR TO MAKE PRESENTATION WHICH IT DID. HERZ REPLIED THERE HAD BEEN NO SPECIFIC EXCHANGES ON QUESTIONS OF AUTOBAHN STOPPAGES BUT WENT ON TO SAY THAT FRG HAD RECEIVED CLEAR SIGNALS FROM GDR DURING GAUS-HONECKER AND SCHMIDT-KHOL MEETINGS THAT GDR HAS BECME VERY SENSITIVE ABOUT UNFAVORABLE PUBLICITY GIVEN RECENT BORDER INCIDENTS AND WANTED TO DEFUSE QUICKLY ESCALATION OF TENSMMN BETWEEN FRG AND GDR WHICH HAD BUILT UP OVER PAST FEW WEEKS.

7. HERZ CONTINUALLY PUT CURRENT SERIES OF RECENT BORDER INCIDENTS, INCLUDING AUGUST 13 EVENTS, IN MOST POSITIVE LIGHT POSSIBLE BY PLACING THEM WITHIN WIDER CONTEXT OF FRGAGDR AND EAST-WEST RELATIONS. HE NOTED, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT ONLY VERY SMALL PERCENTAGE OF LARGER NUMBER OF INCIDENTS ALONG FRG-GDR BORDER INVOLVED SHOOTINGS, AND SOUGHT TO SOFTEN IMPACT OF AUGUST 13 INCIDENT BY POINTING OUT THAT " SIX BUSES DID, AFTER ALL, GET THROUGH TO BERLIN." FINALLY HE TRIED TO DOWNPLAY SERIOUSNESS OF RECENT BORDER INCIDENTS BY SUGGESTING THEY RESULTED FROM EFFECTS OF LONG, HOT SUMMER DAY AND EXCITEMENT OF ELECTION CAMPAIGN AS MUCH AS FROM HARDENED GDR ATTITUDES.

8. MISSION AGREES WITH DEPARTMENT THAT TURNING BACK OF 13 BUSLOADS OF CDU YOUTH AND QUESTIONING OF MANY OTHERS AS TO PURPOSE OF THEIR TRAVEL TO WEST BERLIN FALLS INTO SAME CATEGORY OF UNACCEPTABLE ACTIVITY AS OCCURRED DURING FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL OFFICE CRISIS IN 1974, ONLY ON CONFIDENTIAL

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LARGER AND MORE SERIOUS SCALE.

9. WE CANNOT ACCEPT SUGGESTION BY GOVMAYOR SCHUETZ AND ALLIED BONN GROUP REPS THAT ALLIES AND FRG MUST SOMEHOW RESTRICT THEMSELVES TO ANSWERING GDR TRANSIT COMMISSION PRESENTATION WHICH BASED ON FACTS AS ASSEMBLED SOLELY BY GDR. TO DO SO WOULD DISSIPATE THE FORCE OF THE ALLIED PROTEST. WE AGREE WITH COMMENTS OF US (AND FRENCH) BONN GROUP REP THAT WE MUST KEEP EMPHASIS ON SIMPLE FACT THAT GDR INTERFERRED WITH CIVIL ACCESS FOR POLITICAL REAUNONS.

10. WE ALSO VERY MUCH HOPE THAT AGREEMENT COULD BE OBTAINED TO MAKE DELIVERY OF PROTEST IN CAPITALS, OR VIA EMBASSIES IN MOSCOW. THE POLAD LEVEL HERE IS TOO LOW FOR SUCH A COMPLAINT, ALTHOUGH WE WOULD EXPECT TO FOLLOW

UP A COMPLAINT IN CAPITALS WITH A POLAD PRESENTATION
HERE, A PROCEDURE WHICH WE HAVE OFTEN FOLLOWED BEFORE
IN BERLIN.

11. ISSUE OF PRINCIPLE TO ALLIES AS WELL AS GERMANS IS
INVOLVED HERE. SOVIETS AND GDR WILL CERTAINLY WEIGH
ALLIED REACTION OR ABSENCE THEREOF TO AUGUST 13 INCIDENT
WHEN THEY NEXT CONSIDER WHETHER TO OBSTRUCT GUARANTEED
ACCESS TO BERLIN. HERE IN BERLIN, WE DO NOT THINK
WEST CAN BE ACCUSED OF "STIRRING THE BERLIN POT" BY
REACTING VIGOROUSLY BUT IN DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS TO QA
VIOLATION ON QUESTION OF PRINCIPLE.
GEORGE

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